MOKO

No 2

A SERIOUS REVIEW

Price 10 cts. up

THE ARMY AND POLITICS

Once again, and again from the mouth of the Minister of Home Affaris, we have been warned about the "bunch of Marxists" said to be running rampant among us. So often have we heard this cry, and so often from this same source, that we feel bound to examine the implications of Mr. Montano's exhortation to the army at the recent passing-out parade at Teteron.

It seems time we know who, these Marxists are, and what really they are up to. Who is this power-mad bunch threatening the peace and quiet of our island, and how are they doing it? We would like to know, if only because such a serious charge warrants explanation.

We all remember that not too long ago an enquiry was held to discover the extent of Communist activity among us. When all the fuss was over, and the 'hush-hush' brought to an end, one man was vaguely identified as having Marxist leanings; several others had their characters permanently besmirched and the Industrial Stabilization Act, soon to be "comprehensively reviewed", was introduced in an atmosphere strongly suggestive of terror and the witch hunt.

Since then the Minister of Home Affairs, as if to keep the fires warm, has returned again and again to the same theme. We hope that the next time he speaks on the subject he will take time out to reply to the questions we have asked above. Meanwhile, he might like to ponder with us on a few things, particularly at this time when the Rodney issue has once again focussed attention on the whole question of "security" and the right of dissent in the Caribbean.

SAFEGUARD SECURITY

One of these days we will have to examine the role of the Defence Force in Trinidad and Tobago and ask some very pertinent questions that are already on everybody's lips. For the moment we want to consider some of the implications of Mr. Montano's "charge" to the army to hold itself in readiness to defend their country against Marxists who would sell out the country's independence for power."

In the first place, we do not believe that this country has very much left to sell. If independence is at all marketable, it is possible that we have already sold it, being already in hock, lock, stock and barrel to foreign governments and businessmen.

Secondly, we accept that all governments have a right and duty to safeguard the security of the state, that is, to prevent the forcible subversion, against the wishes of the population, of the major political institutions – parliament, elections, the courts, etc – in the society.

But the moral authority for exercising this duty can be based only on the degree to which the ruling regime enjoys a wide popular approval. If the people by and large accept the existing political apparatus, and approve the general policies of the regime, then the government has every right to protect the state from the threat of violent subversion, if it exists and can be identified.

MOUNTING UNPOPULARITY

When, however, a government is faced with mounting unpopualrity the whole basis of the use of the security power is changed. Indeed,the whole situation is changed. For one of the effects of the loss of public confidence is the increasing insecurity of the government itself; and a government short on public confidence is likely to be driven to desperate measures which progressively infringe on the rights of its citizens. To ensure its own security and to wipe out effective dissent the government may then claim that the security of the nation is at stake and so attempt to rationalize the use of arbitrary and coercive measures.

These are the perspectives within which we must view Mr. Montano and his statement. The real situation here is that the ruling regime is faced with a rapid erosion of its traditional popular support. There can be no mistaking the rising discontent in the country. The government's economic policies have quite clearly entered their menopause. However cleverly the statistics are manipulated, it is clear in the eyes of increasing sections of the population that economic development consists at the moment of much economics and no development. The most obvious indicator of all this is the steady rise in unemployment.

The general situation then is potentially explosive; and the government, above all, is very much aware of this. Faced with this situation, governments usually have only two real choices. One is a fundamental redirection of policy to provide real economic growth and popular partcipation in the country. The other is a mixture of empty policy gestures plus the ever-growing application of coercive measures. For a number of reasons, some more obvious than others, the first choice would appear to be decisively closed, the Prime Minister's convention speech notwithstanding. This leaves only the second alternative, and the signs are already apparent that the government is following this path. Hence, Mr. Montano's exhortations to the army. Hence, too, Mr. A.N.R. Robinson's exhortations to the people.

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MISS MANLEY AND THE PRESS

Readers of MOKO will remember the report in the local Press of Miss Rachel Manley's repentance of her part in the students' demonstration at Mona, Jamaica, on October 16. A Raoul Pantin column, carried in the Trinidad Guardian of October 23, and quoting the Political Reporter of the Jamaica Gleaner, alleged that Miss Manley had confessed her disillusionment with the entire proceedings.

Since then the Press has been silent on the issue,not without cause. We print below Miss Manley's letter which appeared in the Sunday Gleaner of October 27. Readers are asked to draw their own conclusions We print, too, for the amusement of all, the Sunday Gleaner editorial note.

[redacted]

Dear Sirs,

This is in defence of myself in regard to a statement made by the Political Reporter in the SUNDAY GLEANER.

Firstly, he stated that I fled the campus on Wednesday night. I left the campus on Friday afternoon to spend the week at home as I have always done, and doubtless will continue to do. Many Mary Seacolites saw me around the Hall up to Friday afternoon and students saw me at various meetings since Wednesday.

Secondly,they say that I a Jamaican student am disillusioned over the cause I marched for. I marched for the principle of human rights because I felt that the Government had behaved in an arbitrary and provocative way. I still stand by this cause one hundred percent. I hope the student body will realize this is yet another attempt to divide the student body and to use the issue for political purposes.

(Sgd.) Rachel Manley

Mary Seacole Hall

Sunday Gleaner Editorial Note: The Political Reporter reported the facts to us on Thursday,it does not matter if she went back to Campus after Wednesday night. Her letter does not say categorically that she did not leave the campus that week before Friday.

THE GENERATION GAP

By GORDON ROHLEHR

In all societies differences exist both between generations and within each individual age-group. But in a small society such as ours, every gap can lead to a failure in the sympathy which each generation should have for each other. Six years of Independence have intensified the struggle for a new identity, and accentuated the gap between and within generations. Continuity in language, definition and consciousness is disappearing so fast that young people of twenty-five can sometimes find it difficult to communicate with young people of nineteen and twenty.

A COMPLEX SOCIAL SCENE

The gap between generations adds another dimension to an already complex social scene. Trinidad has been a perennially immigrant society living on the margin of Spanish, French and British culture, absorbing the overflow from various other West Indian islands, and importing labour from India, China, Africa and Venezuela. All these peoples were forced to live under savagely competitive conditions which made for opportunism and stark individualism. Everything in the experience of Trinidad, except perhaps Carnival, has worked towards the separatism of groups, and the creation of several islands of consciousness within the larger island. When to all this is added the absurdity of a system where human worth and dignity were measured solely by whiteness and wealth, one can imagine the ramshackle world which is now striving for nationhood. It is not surprising, therefore, that Independence has not yet supplied the country with any idea capable of welding the different segments of the population into a nation.

NO UNIFYING IDEA

But small poor countries need at least one unifying idea and purpose and cannot afford the luxury of too much social incoherence. Such incoherence hinders every aspect of national life, since it affects attitudes to work, the pride of the people, the goals towards which they strive, and their creative spirit. Our writers have felt this incoherence and a sense of loss, futility and alienation permeates their writing before Independence. After Independence a poet like Derek Walcott sees life as a trial by fire in a barren waste-land; while Naipaul, who is admittedly estranged from his native Trinidad,uncovers with a disturbing degree of accuracy, the mimicry and absurdity of our politics. Our politics since Independence clearly have not supplied the unifying idea which will give our history meaning and continuity, and thereby bridge the chasms in society, and the gulfs in consciousness both wtihin and between generations.

Independence took us by surprise though Haitian protest poetry in the twenties and the bitter rejection of European values in French West Indian poetry of the late thirties and forties were a sign that the Caribbean area was awakening to a new consciousness of itself. Much of what Stokely Carmichael is saying today had its poetic equivalent in Aime Cesaire's work. Rhetorical excess is a noticeable feature of the early stages of protest. The black man, enslaved by Europe's misrepresentation of his past, realizes that he must free himself by a violent reversal in rhetoric. Long before Cesaire, Trinidad's Jacob Thomas embarked on a passionate refutation of J.A. Froude's theories of black inferiority. Froudacity is a mixture of rhetorical splendour and rhetorical excess, and is an early assertion of black dignity and identity.

WEST INDIAN HISTORIANS

Independence was also presaged in Eric Williams' Capitalism and Slavery, a work which demonstrates what happens when the West Indian academic is forced to look at the running life-sore of his history. Here there is not rhetorical excess, but the sort of detachment which brings all of Cesaire's bitterness under the strict control of historical discipline and ironic economy. Williams arranges his facts in such a way as to produce not only a refutation of much British historical writing about the West Indies and Negro slavery, but also a satire on the incredbile fraudulence of Christian Europe.

Indeed, even a gentler and less assuming historian such as Elsa Goveia is moved by a wondering hurt at the perennial hypocrisy of the planter class. Her work depicts the second stage of West Indian self-discovery. She is deliberately unrhetorical. Her prose is marked by a bleak fidelity to fact and commonsense, which in itself suggests the powerful flow of emotion beneath the surface. By allowing the facts to speak for themselves she simultaneously destroys old patterns of thought and suggests new lines along which the writing of West Indian history can proceed. Her concern is more with definition than with protest, and she identifies the concept of democracy as one of the essential ideas for which West Indians have fought throughout the centuries. She sees it as the duty of the intellectual

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BOGLE'S REMINDER

A personal statement by Dr. Walter Rodney

What has so far been missing from the discussion of the Rodney Affair has been a statement by Dr. Rodney himself. We have been fortunate in acquiring such a statement and we publish it in full. We call it 'Bogle's Reminder', as Rodney himself has done, to emphasize the historical continuity of the events which have recently taken place in Jamaica.

Marcus Garvey always asserted that as a Black Man he would disregard all national boundaries to make contact with Africans everywhere. The Government of Garvey's home country, Jamaica, has barred me – a Guyanese, a Black Man, an African. That Government has a large percentage of Black Men, but as the brothers say, they are "white-hearted". They serve the interests of foreign white imperialists, and they support a social structure in which the Black Man is economically and culturally oppressed. They have tried their best to ignore the plight of the Black Man, to stifle his struggles and to deny his efforts to achieve a new consciousness, and new cultural expressions; but all these efforts are ultimately bound to fail. The Government of Jamaica knows this and they are in a constant state of fear.

TWO FORCES

The activity of the black masses and the frightened reaction of the "white-hearted" Jamaican Government are the two contradictory forces which have produced the recent upheavals in Kingston. It is, obvious, therefore, that this confrontation was in the making long before my arrival in Jamaica, less than a year ago. It is equally obvious that it will continue long after I have left and only the terrified set of men who rule Jamaica could possibly have been under the delusion that banning me would have any effect in delaying their day of judgement.

There has just come into my possession the "Text of Statement by the Honourable H.L. Shearer, Prime Minister of Jamaica, made in the House of Representatives on October 17, regarding the"Government's exclusion of Dr. Walter Rodney." That statement makes a number of charges against me – all of which are either meaningless or trivial, and the Dishonourable H.L. Shearer, Prime Minister of Jamaica, lamely falls back on saying that he cannot reveal the "graver and more serious aspects to Dr. Rodney's subversive activities in Jamaica". I will not defend myself against such charges for two reasons. In the first place, the Government must cease hiding behind vague phrases and substantiate their claims In the second place, (and this is far more fundamental) those traitors to the Black Race have no moral authority to lay accusations against me, a son of Africa.

Our black brothers in Jamaica have already started proceedings to indict their oppressors, both black and white. My statement at this point is a positive assertion of confidence in their ability and an attempt to contribute to the ongoing struggle, by reflecting upon my own limited involvement.

THE BLACK INTELLECTUAL

My position is that of the black intellectual in a colonial society. That society offers educated black men positions of privilege and relatively secure economic conditions in exchange for their souls. The black intellectuals are as much a part of the white capitalist system as are bank managers and plantation overseers. Their position is secure on condition that they make no meaningful contact with the black masses.

The black intellectual is also more compromised and more dehumanised than the black brother in the street or on the land because he is more completely a paper representation of what white men want us all to be, What to do? How to break out of the Babylonian Captivity? Those are the questions that pose themselves to the educated Black Man as he gains in consciousness.

There are three possible answers the first is to attack wherever possible the distortions produced by white cultural imperialism in his own field of study. The second is to launch an attack against all social myths which seek to destroy the identity and creativity of the black masses. Thirdly, the conscious black intellectual must attach himself to the activities of black people seeking emmancipation. We shall concentrate here on the second and third of the above points.

THE RACIAL MYTH

Our West Indian society virtually invented racism. It was there on the slave plantations that the fantastic socio-economic gulf between black and white came to be rationalized and projected as the 'natural' order of things. The white man looked at his property, the black people, and rated them little higher than the beasts on his plantation. He felt that he was innately superior and the black man inherently inferior – born to be a hewer of wood and a drawer of water. Under the guidance of white West Indian planters, there then developed pseudo-scientific and theological theories which were supposed to "prove" the inferiority of Africans. Later on, the racism intensified, assuming subtle forms of colour discrimination based on the fundamental assumption that within the hierarchy of creation the lowest orders were black and the highest white. But curiously enough this very development produced one of the myths which have been used to keep the black man in chains. The myth goes as follows:-

"We have no problem of black and white, because we have every type of skin colour you can imagine from jet black to silky white. We have a multi-racial society and anyone who wants to make progress must not talk about race. We have a harmonious multi-racial society and an integrated multi-racial society."

The myth that we are anything approaching a harmonious integrated multi-racial society must be blasted into nothingness. This is the sort of task which I attempted to perform at the University and a Black Power Movement sprung into existence around the ideas of black consciousness. What I will try to explain is the way in which black people accepted the ideas of Black Power and the ways in which the Jamaican Government and its middle class supporters of all colours were quick to go into the attack against those same ideas of Black Power. Remember that this is our major concern – to understand the activity of the black sufferers in confronting the oppressive state machinery of Jamaica and to understand why that activity inspired fear into the minds of those shabby and disreputable men who call themselves politicians in that part of the world.

BLACK STRUGGLE

The black masses have never accepted the notion that they should not organise on their own behalf. They have sometimes demonstrated this in a spectacular manner. October is the month of the PAUL BOGLE uprising of 1865, when a Black Man fought the white system in Jamaica, calling on his brothers to "remember your colour and cleave to the black brother". Marcus Garvey also made a dynamic appeal to black consciousness in Jamaica and elsewhere, in the period between the two world wars. But even when a great leader is not on the scene, the daily struggle of black people continues. In our time, that struggle has been led by the Rastafari,a group which has rejected white capitalist Jamaican society and has sought its religious and cultural inspiration from Ethiopia and Africa.

The Rastafari and numerous other black Jamaicans who have achieved a consciousness of themselves as black Africans are fully aware of the significance of Black Power. Indeed, it is they who can tell any so-called educated black what the whole thing is about. The Jamaican population know that suffering and blackness are equated. They know that the vast proportion of the population is black but the land and major industries are owned by whites (mostly foreigners). They know that the 'brown' class, the Chinese and the Syrians are all part of the upper ranks of society, that unemployment and grief are the lot of the black masses, that the beauty of Jamaica is sold to white tourists while blacks live in ugly squalor. They know that the system denies them the opportunity to have access to African culture and to create their own way of life.

OFFICIAL REACTION

Since the black population knows all these things, they respond immediately to any public discussion of such issues, and this is where the middle class and the Government begin to react violently The black puppets who administer Jamaica are terrified of any discussion of the black question. The Congress of Afro-Jamaican Affairs submitted that African history and an African language should be taught in the schools, and the Prime Minister rejected this. Black militants from the U.S.A. such as Stokely Carmichael and James Formen are prohibited from entering Jamaica. All publications of Malcolm X, Elijah Mohammed and Stokely Carmichael are banned. In my own case, the local T.V. authorities refused to carry through a Black Power Programme in which I was interviewed, which provides a small but typical example of the regime's behaviour. Many friendly individuals approached me expressing concern that if I continued to make Black Power prouncements and to denounce the Jamaican Government in the terms which it deserved, I might be banned. My usual reply was that the job had to be done and that it was necessary for some of us black intellectuals to articulate fearlessly and publicly the feelings of the black people. It was not for me to worry about what the Jamaican Government would do - that was their problem.

Recent events have shown that it was a big problem for them. By refusing my re-entry into Jamaica, they have caused me certain difficulties, but look what they have done to themselves!

POPULAR RESPONSE

Quite apart from the demonstration by students of the University, the regime was dealt a sharp blow by the Black Man in the capital city, Kingston. The anger of the people gave rise to the burning of 49 buses, the setting of 14 different fires in the city, and the destruction and looting of numerous commercial premises - causing the centre of Kingston to look as though hurricane Flora had actually struck. When the whole story is revealed the catalogue of the black people's wrath is certain to be greater. The riots in Jamaica in the month of October '68 are a fitting reminder of PAUL BOGLE'S uprising in the Jamaican Parish of St. Thomas, October 1865. We will not forget BOGLE'S example.

As stated at the outset, that huge outcry was rooted in the social situation in Jamaica. It also reflects the intensity of oppression at the present moment. It is very significant that buses were burnt, because the Jamaican Omnibus Service, the private company that monopolises public transport in Kingston, is hated both by its workers and the public. Recently, there was an increase in bus fares, adding to the burdens of black sufferers and forcing some of them to walk; while white, Chinese, Syrian, brown and some black middle class individuals drive around in luxurious American cars. Above all, the riots were the product of the monumental unemployment and social stagnation which exists in Kingston. It is only against this background that one can understand why the brothers were sparked into action on the occasion of my being banned, for that was a brazen act of provocation on the part of the puppet government – aiming to deprive black sufferers of an educated black spokesman.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

It is necessary that the population of Jamaica and the West Indies should learn the nature of my small attempts to relate to black people, and to subordinate myself to their conceptions.

The first,essential was to operate outside of the petty bourgeois University campus and outside of the 'respectable' middle class suburb where I resided. My background in Guyana was working class, but after the alienation produced by the educational system, it was up to me to take the initiative to rediscover my brothers and sisters I sought them out where they lived, worked, worshipped, and had their recreation. In turn, they 'checked' me at work or at home, and together we 'probed' here and there, learning to recognise our common humanity. Naturally, they wanted to know what I stood for, what I 'defended'. I never gave anyone money or bought them drinks - that one must leave to the political gangsters of the two-party system. At some point, I ceased to be "Dr.

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The inaugural issue of MOKO, a fortnight ago, had as its most direct inspiration the public scandal that people are now calling "The Rodney Affair." The paper was started at that particular point because a group of people who were very concerned about the implications of Rodney's disbarment from Jamaica, were also very concerned at the evident bias and one-sidedness of the reports on this incident that were being published in the Trinidad press. Given this situation, it followed that our first issue was more or less exclusively directed to correcting the imbalance in the information available to Trinidadians. It also followed, given the context of bias in which it was made that this attempt at objectivity would be subjected to a variety of misinterpretations.

In a review in the Trinidad Guardian (October 30), a staff columnist announces the launching of a new newspaper "by the University people" — a statement which not only misses the point but reinforces the popular conception of a University community which has constituted itself into a political party. In Mausica Teacher's College, where a group of us went to introduce MOKO and were subsequently invited to stage a panel discussion on the implications of the Rodney issue, a Canadian instructor (about three months' resident in Trinidad) is reported to have raised a storm with the College administration about "allowing these communists to come here."

This reaction parallels that of "Wideawake", who wrote to the Guardian about a Communist plot which he has recently detected. Officialdom, through its mouthpiece Mr. Montano, warned a group of recruits at Teteron to "be prepared to defend their country against a bunch of Marxists." We are so derivative that we cannot even invent our own neuroses, and must like America, see every local ill as a Marxist plot of subversion. The same calculated naivety is evident in the statements of the Canadian, Wideawake and the Minister of Home Affairs. Mr. Montano talks of a Red Menace, and there certainly is a Red Menace, — but is it only the menace of Red Herrings. What we really face is an escalation of nonsense and insignificance.

West Indian society is being undone not only by graft and lies, but by rhetoric and cliche. MOKO is an attempt to counter both the discussion of trivial issues, and the trivial discussion of serious ones, so evident in all our local media. By doing this we hope to lessen the political illiteracy which makes possible the daily corruption of our society.

DANGER OF RHETORIC

It is cliche and deliberate abuse of rhetoric that enable a nest of hard-faced cynics, from Jamaica to Guyana, to practise their peculiar blend of graft and piety. We know full well that the platitudes come from all quarters of the society. Thus we consider remarks such as "The older generation are useless — get rid of them", as no less irrelevant than the Attorney General's patronizing statements about student revolt. The one indicates something of the brash self-conscious militancy of the young, the other something of the easy complacency that refuses to investigate the deeper implications of student protest in our society. Both are the result of over-simplification, and it is the very prevalence of this kind of response in our society that makes the appearance of new public media an urgent necessity.

We hope to offer some freshness of vision wherever possible. We hope at least to become a forum for serious and informed opinion, and invite criticism of our efforts to achieve this end. At this time of ferment in our society, we think it our duty to pinpoint and define the important issues as accurately as we can, and make at least this contribution to a widening of public awareness. Ultimately it is a question of self-respect; of either accepting absurdity as the inevitable element of our daily life, or rejecting it and trying to create areas of sanity and direction.

We knew from the start what were the prospects facing MOKO; we knew that our hardest efforts would have to be directed to explaining and elaborating our position, again and again, against the great tide of non-significance that now passes for discussion. Most of this will naturally be done as an incidental of discussion on particular points; in presenting fresh evidence on the Rodney issue for instance, we sought to make it clear that we were doing simply that, with suitable aid, we think legitimate commentary. But this of course did not prevent the wilful from levelling inane charges of "subversion" "communism" and so on. So as early as possible it might be as well to make a few positive statements about our general position.

The paper was launched at very short notice by a group of people who had only one thing definitely in common — a deep dissatisfaction with the availability of information and the state of public discussion in the West Indies. We were all alarmed at the prospect of a society closing in on itself, a society from which free and realistic discussion is being progressively excluded, where our news media are filled with nothing more important than the grotesque trivial "beauty" shows and "fashion" parades, spiced by way of "seriousness", with the fat commonplaces of the official classes.

NOT CONFINED TO UNIVERSITY

The Rodney incident triggered the impulse to produce this newspaper, but Rodney was not important for himself or as a "University person" — he was important as a particularly significant symptom of the real danger in which our society stands. The concern behind the impulse was not a partisan "University concern, but a concern with the prospects of an entire society. It is true that the project started in the St. Augustine campus, in the sense that it was first broached at a meeting there. But none of those present saw this as having any special significance, and we conceived the project as embracing all people, from all sectors of the society, who have an interest in having a newspaper dedicated to something other than the trivial and the non-problematic which, so far, has been our daily bread. Since the launching of MOKO this expectation has been justified; our editorial board includes a number of persons who have no connection at all with the university, as well as people who do; and support in gifts and subscriptions has come overwhelmingly from outside the University.

At the same time, although the project began at St. Augustine, it has been received enthusiasitcally in at least two other Caribbean territories — Jamaica and Guyana, where groups have indicated their eagerness to join in the project and make the paper a regional effort. This commitment to regionalism is, in fact, the one commitment that can be taken as general among all those participating in the production of MOKO; and in so far as such a commitment is subversive in the view of certain West Indian governments, then MOKO is openly subversive. For the rest, we wish to examine particular issues as they arise, as objectively and impartially as possible — and in practice this means that we are willing and determined to publish all sides of a question, provided only that contributions make some show of reasoned argument. It was for this purpose that MOKO was launched and we invite the general public to make use of it.

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Jamaica, and numerous Black Power pronouncements and to denounce the Jamaican Government in the terms which it deserved, I might be banned. My usual reply was that the job had to be done and that it was necessary for some of us black intellectuals to articulate fearlessly and publicly the feelings of the black people. It was not for me to worry about what the Jamaican Government would do - that was their problem.

Recent events have shown that it was a big problem for them. By refusing my re-entry into Jamaica, they have caused me certain difficulties, but look what they have done to themselves!

POPULAR RESPONSE

Quite apart from the demonstration by students of the University, the regime was dealt a sharp blow by the Black Man in the capital city, Kingston. The anger of the people gave rise to the burning of 49 buses, the setting of 14 different fires in the city, and the destruction and looting of numerous commercial premises - causing the centre of Kingston to look as though hurricane Flora had actually struck. When the whole story is revealed the catalogue of the black people's wrath is certain to be greater. The riots in Jamaica in the month of October '68 are a fitting reminder of PAUL BOGLE'S uprising in the Jamaican Parish of St. Thomas, October 1865. We will not forget BOGLE'S example.

As stated at the outset, that huge outcry was rooted in the social situation in Jamaica. It also reflects the intensity of oppression at the present moment. It is very significant that buses were burnt, because the Jamaican Omnibus Service, the private company that monopolises public transport in Kingston, is hated both by its workers and the public. Recently, there was an increase in bus fares, adding to the burdens of black sufferers and forcing some of them to walk; while white, Chinese, Syrian, brown and some black middle class individuals drive around in luxurious American cars. Above all, the riots were the product of the monumental unemployment and social stagnation which exists in Kingston. It is only against this background that one can understand why the brothers were sparked into action on the occasion of my being banned, for that was a brazen act of provocation on the part of the puppet government — aiming to deprive black sufferers of an educated black spokesman.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

It is necessary that the population of Jamaica and the West Indies should learn the nature of my small attempts to relate to black people, and to subordinate myself to their conceptions.

The first essential was to operate outside of the petty bourgeois University campus and outside of the 'respectable' middle class suburb where I resided. My background in Guyana was working class, but after the alienation produced by the educational system, it was up to me to take the initiative to rediscover my brothers and sisters I sought them out where they lived, worked, worshipped, and had their recreation. In turn, they 'checked' me at work or at home, and together we 'probed' here and there, learning to recognise our common humanity. Naturally, they wanted to know what I stood for, what I 'defended'. I never gave anyone money or bought them drinks - that one must leave to the political gangsters of the two-party system. At some point, I ceased to be "Dr. Rodney", "Brother Rodney" or "Brother Wally". That simple change meant that I was no longer a tool of the establishment, but was readmitted into the moral and cultural brotherhood of the Black Man.

Marcus Garvey taught himself oratory. The system trained me in public speaking through their various debating societies, etc. I was therefore ready and willing to speak publicly on Black Power and on Africa at any time and at any place. I did in fact speak at secondary schools and other educational institutions, in youth centres, on radio, in churches,in the public park in Race Course, in the country and in the town. What was discussed obviously bothered the regime, because I did not hesitate to raise the question of revolutionary social change. But the little men who run Jamaica (locally) were even more frightened of the places where I found myself. In the gullies, backyards and rubbish dumps to which they have confined the black people in the hope that the world would forget their existence. Some of my most profound experiences have been the sessions of reasoning or 'grounding' with black brothers, squatting on an old car tire or a rusty five gallon can. It was this 'grounding' with my black brothers that the regime considered sinister and subversive.

MY CONTRIBUTION

There was a contribution which I could make, there was experience derived from travel, my familiarity with the written word, and there were the particular skills as a historian which white capitalist society had permitted me to acquire But my role was essentially that of a helper — aiding groups to carry out the sort of activity which they were already planning or engaged in. Essentially, the first conscious black youths whom I met wanted assistance in carrying out a programme which they described as "uniting Africans at home and abroad". They sought advise on getting literature and on putting out their publications, and they asked that I share my knowledge of African history and culture.

Many of our black brothers in Jamaica are already internationalists. They do not allow the geographical boundaries of Jamaica to confine their thoughts. The government of Jamaica termed my activities "anti-Jamaican" — how laughable! These are men who have failed to recover Jamaican soil from the foreign-owned sugar estates, and have gone further in selling the parishes of St. Ann and St. Elizabeth to the North American bauxite companies, in selling the beaches to white foreigners, and in selling the Jamaican black woman as domestic servants to North America. It is the Government (and Opposition) who will have to account to the people for their "anti-activities".

ANON

From my exposure in Jamaica I have gained a great deal: knowledge, humility and confidency. The Rastafari brethren have taught me to understand their conception of language and the "Word"; they have convinced me that beyond the tangible there lies the "Cosmic Power" that expresses itself in Man. To learn from them (and other Africans in Jamaica) one has to achieve humility, and having learnt one is humbler still. Our 'grounding' together has inspired mutual confidence in the future. Africans have already performed a miracle of survival. We have been subjected to genocidal practices in Africa the West, and yet

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enable a nest of hard-faced cynics, lend of graft and piety. We know of the society. Thus we consider t rid of them", as no less irrelevant about student revolt. The one in- cy of the young, the other some- stigate the deeper implications of f over-simplification, and it is the that makes the appearance of new

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by a group of people who had only tion with the availability of inform- Indies. We were all alarmed at the m which free and realistic discussion ia are filled with nothing more im- nd "fashion" parades, spiced by way fficial classes.

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roduce this newspaper, but Rodney rson" – he was important as a part- ich our society stands. The concern concern, but a concern with the project started in the St. Augustine meeting there. But none of those nd we conceived the project as em- who have an interest in having a vial and the non-problematic which, of MOKO this expectation has been ersons who have no connection at all support in gifts and subscriptions has

at St. Augustine, it has been received tories – Jamaica and Guyana, where roject and make the paper a regional one commitment that can be taken duction of MOKO; and in so far as tain West Indian governments, then to examine particular issues as they d in practice this means that we are on, provided only that contributions his purpose that MOKO was launched

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"Sooner or later.
But Mus'.
The Dam going to bus' and every Man will break out.
And who will stop them?
What force can stop this river of Man
Who already know their course?
The water that was used to mix the mortar for the dam
Is the blood that was gathered at the slaughter of the lamb.
The blood of PAUL BOGLE, the lamb who made them need the force
Was used to mix the mortar for the dam that stops our course.
The cement was his own black brethren who were the first policemen.
And when we reclaim water and cement we will run free again.
But sure.

MOKO WANTS TO KNOW

It is difficult to say who is running BWIA these days. But, whoever it is, we would like to know what procedures obtain for appointment to responsible and presumably highly paid positions in that Company. On Sunday, October 27, a release in both of the local dailies informed us that Mr. Trevor Bertie was appointed General Counsel and Company Secretary to BWIA; Mr. James Brady was appointed Assistant General Manager in charge of Personnel Administration.

MOKO would like to know whether these positions were advertised, what are the requirements and specifications of the posts, and what are the qualifications of the two appointees for filling them. Perhaps we ought to say that we will treat silence as an evasion of the issue. In that case we will continue to ask. We want to know.

FREE UNIVERSITY

WE ARE NOT ALONE

BULLETIN NO. 14

What are the parallels between what is happening at U.W.I. and what has been happening in many other educational institutions throughout the world?

In "The Times" (London, May 27th, 1968) Richard Davy wrote that "among students educational and political protest usually go together . . . educational and political issues have been so closely mingled in almost every outbreak that it has become impossible to separate them. Students have come to see the Univeristy system as a product and part of the political system and they are demanding full citizens rights in both. Although a constant theme of all student protest is the demand for full representation in University administration, many of the principal explosions, including those at Berkeley, West Berlin, the London School of Economics, Essex, and Warsaw, have been ignited by the authorities' attempts to curb political activity and free speech on the University premises."

Is this the case in Jamaica?

While one can make the distinction between those student movements which aim at student power within the University and those which are concerned with political issues in the society or the world (such as demonstrations aimed against U.S. aggression in Vietnam), the crucial link between these types of movements is a growing concern on the part of the students that what they study is morally relevant to the social or world situation.

For example, the recent confrontation which occurred at Columbia University in New York was concerned with the use that was being made of the University's research staff and with the contemptuous manner in which the ivory-towered University continues to ignore the desperate problems of neighbouring Harlem. Since the University authorities would not support this moral stand of the students a confrontation was unavoidable.

Indeed, the American student movement as a whole has developed from a moral concern with the surrounding social situation. It arose from the civil rights struggles of the early 1960's which culminated in the Mississippi Summer Project of 1964, when thousands of white students streamed south and learnt for the first time the brutals realities of the area as experienced everyday by its black people. Since then the failure of the "American Dream" has been even more apparent in the massive demonstrations against U.S. aggression in Vietnam and against the pseudo-democratic system in which no real difference exists between the two political party machines which dominate the political scene. Students are becoming aware that "freedom" and "democracy" are not a reality in such a system. Again we quote from the "Times" of May 27th referring to the U.S.A. "There have been demonstrations at about 1000 of the country's 2250 institutions of higher learning during the past three years."

The greatest example of the moral concern of the young and the brutal realities of a police state occured during the Democratic Convention in Chicago last August. A moral law and a moral social order, which is what student movements throughout the world are concerned about, is a far cry from the "law and order" demanded by Mayor Daley of Chicago or Hugh Shearer of Jamaica. "Chicago" taught us what "law and order" can mean. After all, the protestors were not violent. "The streets were dangerous because of the police." What the "New Statesman" (Sept. 6, 1968) says of Chicago was recently appealingly true in Kingston.

Or take another example: Mexico in 1968. On the 26th July a group of Mexican students inadvertently started a movement that has not yet stopped – that will not stop – cannot be stopped until it has succeeded Inadvertently, unknowingly, because what they started was a small demonstration. But through the brutal intervention of the police, student solidarity was strengthened and the sympathy of the public was aroused. To quote from a correspondent in the Universidad Nacional, dateline Sept. 6: "what started as a demonstration by a preparatory (pre-University) school has grown into a large scale political movement involving all the state schools in Mexico City and in many of the provinces. About 250,000 students in Mexico City alone are not attending classes. At the height of one student demonstration on the 28th July the authorities sent in the army, who charged with fixed bayonets and broke down with a bazooka the door of a school where some students had taken refuge.

These stupid acts of brutality (several students were killed in the attack though denied by the authorities) united the student movement, up till then divided over their course of action, and brought 200,000 students of the Universidad Nacional & the Politechnico out on strike. The Press Radio and T.V., though theoretically independent are forced into conformity by a government who finances them and has control of paper supplies Their attitude was first one of complete silence (after a demonstration of 100,000 students which stopped traffic in the towncentre for four hours) and then one of open hostility to and misrepresentation of the student movement. The one paper "Porque?" , a weekly, politically independent, that was going to print photos and a story sympathetic to the student cause had its offices broken into, smashed, and burnt the night before it was due to go press.

More recently the movement has broadened its base, involving other members of the public along with the students. The government reaction

(Continued on Back Page)

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MOKO

No 2

A SERIOUS REVIEW

Price 10 cts. up

FREE UNIVERSITY

WE ARE NOT ALONE

BULLETIN NO. 14

(Continued from Page 3)

has been extreme and violent – troops occupied the university and killed many people at a large demonstration in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas – and has thus increased student solidarity and militancy along with public support. The students have not been intimidated – they are still on strike – and, even more important, they have sent groups into factories and fields to contact the people whose cause they correctly perceive as their own.

This is essential – the struggle for freedom is the struggle for freedom for all, for every brother and sister living in the oppressive society. If the students fail to do this their actions will rightly be construed by the rest of the population as a struggle by the already privileged for yet more privileges. Such a privileged minority is anxious to maintain the prevailing extreme inequalities of wealth and poverty, suppressing all thought of the utter wretchedness of the majority. If the struggle is to have moral meaning, as all these struggles do, this meaning is the end of privilege, of injustice and of inequality.

Now we can understand why the student movements are political as well as educational – and are, in their very essence, moral. One cannot isolate one incident such as the Jamaican Government's immoral treatment of Dr. Rodney, of the student demonstrators, and the U.W.I. at Mona from the social context as a whole. This became apparent here in the immediate aftermath of the peaceful student demonstration when the oppressed people of Kingston rose up to express their violent vengeance upon an unjust and immoral society.

The lessons we can learn from Mexico, and from other events such as those that occurred in France earlier in the year, are many and are directly applicable to our situation. Amongst these lessons are:

1. The students must remain united (in our case, they are united with the academic and administrative staff as well) and must not be intimidated.
2. The students have a responsibility to explain the whole situation, as well as the various particular incidents to the public at large – in fact to the world. To do this they must develop their own news and opinion media, independent of government control.

The students must not underestimate the power,interms of organized armed force of their opposition. Rather, they should rely upon the moral power, in term of public opinion, of their own case and position.

THE ARMY AND POLITICS

• (From Page 1)

Unlike Jamaica, the army in Trinidad and Tobago has not yet become accustomed to being employed to suppress sporadic manifestations of social disorder. It would seem, however, that we need to face up squarely to the possible involvement of the army in the political life of this country. This can happen in one of two ways.

WILLING TOOL

The first is that the army can become the willing tool of any particular government which in the face of rising discontent is bent on maintaining itself in power and eliminating genuine dissent. There is no shortage of precedence for this kind of alliance between army and government in the newer countries. One factor which might tend to favour this development is Trinidad's membership of the O.A.S. The Organization of American States is for all practical purposes a security institution aimed at preserving economic and political systems in the hemisphere which are increasingly at odds with popular aspirations.

MILITARY MEASURES

With the collapse of the Alliance for Progress, the United States which dominates the O.A.S. has turned increasingly to the use of military measures for the preservation of the status quo in Latin America and the Caribbean. Militarily, Trinidad occupies a very strategic location in the Caribbean. In terms of United States strategic planning it is undesirable that any political regime at odds or likely to be at odds with United States requirements should be allowed to develop. A desperate and unpopular government is likely to use this simple fact to fashion an amity with the U.S.A. based on the declaration that its opponents are Marxists. Thereafter it is simple logic to use coercive power to suppress them, and it might well be that it would choose the army to do this.

TAKE-OVER

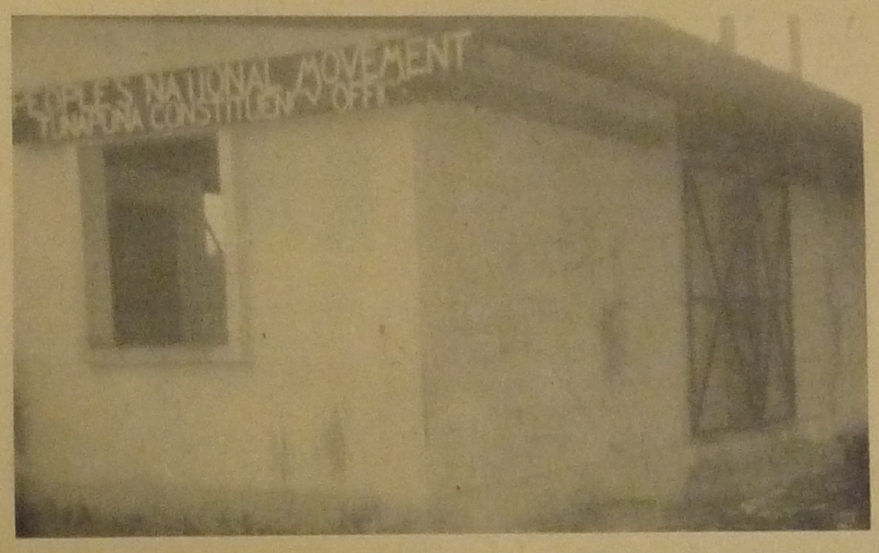
But there is a second possibility which we should like to consider; the Minister of Home Affairs might like to consider it too. This is that once the army becomes accustomed to thinking of itself as responsible for the internal political security of the country, and once it gets used to intervening against popular demonstrations, it is quite likely one day to act on its own, that is , to take political action independent of the government. The logical extension of this, of course, is the military take-over of the government.

This prospect is not as far fetched or as naive as it might at first sight appear. It has often been argued that army officers trained in the British-Sandhurst tradition can be trusted not to intervene in politics. But a series of interventions by British trained officers, in Pakistan, Ghana, Nigeria and elsewhere, have exploded this myth once and for all. The general point is that in "developing societies", there is little effective guarantee against military intervention in politics.

POLITICAL BATTLES

In this connection we cannot ignore the Carenage incident of 1963. Here was a clear case of arbitrary, unauthorised action by military personnel in the civilian sphere. We recall also that far from disciplining the soldiers involved and so clearly reasserting the principle of civilian control, the government refused to act on, or even to publish the findings of a commission of enquiry established to investigate the incident. This kind of response from the responsible political authority certainly does not serve to remind the military of its subordination to civilian government.

One thing is certain: the safety of this society does not rest on a single politician's sense of responsibility. We need to discover and implement the rules by which we are going to live and then to stick to them. A man's commitment to democracy is not to be judged by the swiftness with which he rushes to the defence of Czechoslovakia a long, safe distance away. It is to be judged by what he does here. In this regard the prospects are not too good for Mr. Montano. In calling on the army to arbitrate his political battles for him he is obviously playing with fire. One of these days he might get burnt.



This is the photograph of the Arouca Railway Station now converted to the P.N.M. Constituency Headquarters for Tunapuna. With whose permission? Why? Is this a precedent for the other stations?

THE GENERATION GAP

• From Page One

the creative artist, the teacher and the politician to make their talents available for democracy; and argues that true democracy can never come under the present economic system. She advances an argument for radical change of the structure of West Indian society based on a sound knowledge of the facts of our historical experience.

TODAY'S GENERATION

All of this is deeply relevant to the question of a generation gap, since it is clear that young people are reading Williams, C.L.R. James,Elsa Goveia, Frantz Fanon, Stokely Carmichael, Malcolm X, and the growing literature from Harlem. They are passing through the inferno of West Indian history and of black experience in the New World, and each encounter is a traumatic shock, separating them from even the most radical of their parents. Each age defines for itself what is radical and what is conservative. Today's young people are the inevitable products of that ferment of emotions and ideas which began in the twenties and thirties and which increased when West Indians started to write West Indian history. Since such reconstruction has meant a bitter rejection of old colonial modes of thinking, and a conscious attempt to conquer the self-contempt which white racial prejudice and the plantation system left in their wake, today's generation wavers between a justifiable bitterness and a stridently self-assertive racial pride.

A TRANSITIONAL BITTERNESS

It is important not to misinterpret this bitterness as anarchy, or this pride as mere pose. When blackness emerges as an ideal among a significant section of the youth of the community, it is a sign that they are going through the first stage of rebellion against the twisted values we inherited from slavery. Indeed, this radical element among our young people, is providing West Indian history with a continuity of idea which our politics since Independence have failed to provide. The violence of their language is part of the psychology of early protest, and has its parallel in Césaire's poetry and J.J. Thomas's Froudacity. Moreover it is unfair to ask the bearded Afro-shirted soul-brethren to define any clear position. Neither our writers nor our politicians have been able to do this, and officialdom has been so busy discrediting academism, that our intellectuals are being condemned for both their involvement and their complacency.

NEED FOR CONTINUITY

To weld a national spirit will require more than the tourist-orientated bigger-and-better-every-year, commercial Carnival; more too, than the Better Villages scheme, "buy local'. claypsoes, and baths in Shanty Town. To say that ours is a multi-racial community and that it is foolhardy to see oneself as African, Indian or Chinese makes no sense unless a living alternative is offered to racism, in the form of an idea which can unify the society. Under the present system, dissenting youth will inevitably see identity as racial. There is need for today's youth to realize that protest in the name of racial, personal and national dignity is not an entirely new phenomenon in West Indian history. But this charity towards the senior generation and the dead will not come about until West Indian politics achieves the status of West Indian historiography,and the writer of Capitalism and Slavery, the professor of the 1956 Woodford Square lectures, and the leader of the P.N.M. become one and the same person.

OURSELVES TO BLAME

If there is no continuity in our politics, and political independence does not vindicate and affirm itself in economic freedom, some of the gaps, in our society will continue to widen. It will become increasingly more difficult for generations to communicate with each other, since nothing will have been done either to channel the initial bitterness of youthful protest into the more prosaic act of reconstruction and independence, or to help the older generation to understand the traumatic nature of the self-recognition which our young people are beginning to endure. Commitment of the intellectual to his society will remain the pure crucifixion that it is, since any West Indian government which does not provide its people with an idea will be forced to discredit even the most justifiable criticism; and our society will remain the absurdity it always has been, only more tragic since we will ourselves be the ones to blame. Massa day done.

THERE WILL BE A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NEWSPAPER ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, AT 8.00 P.M. AT THE STUDENTS GUILD UWI, ST. AUGUSTINE ALL ARE INVITED.

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